

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN DUTY-FREE TOURIST ALLOWANCES

REF: STATE 179163

1. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF REFTEL, ECON COUNSELOR DISCUSSED PROSPECTS FOR REINTRODUCTION OF LIBERALIZED DUTY-FREE TOURIST ALLOWANCE IN NEXT BUDGET WITH OFFICIALS AT FINANCE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND RECALLED IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO SUCH LIBERALIZATION. HE RECEIVED, AS ANTICIPATED, BASICALLY NON-COMMITTAL REPONSES. FINANCE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL SAID BUDGET DECISIONS NOT YET MADE BY MINISTER. SOURCES ALL SAID THAT EVEN IF THEY KNEW WHAT MINISTER INTENDED THEY WOULD BE ENJOINED FROM TELLING US BY STRICT RULES OF SECRECY ON BUDGET MATTERS. EXTAFF OFFICIAL (SHORTLIFFE, DIRECTOR, USA DIVISION) COMMENTED THAT THIS WAS TYPE OF MEASURE WHICH SEEMED NON-CONTROVERSIAL AND HE WOULD GUESS THAT IT WOULD BE REINTRODUCED: THIS WAS STRICTLY PERNAL OPINION, HOWEVER.

2. CHARGE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF MEETING WITH EXTAFF'S WESTERN HEMISPHERE BUREAU DIRECTOR GENERAL NUTT AND ECONOMIC BUREAU DIRECTOR GENERAL MCDOUGALL TODAY TO REAFFIRM USG INTEREST IN REINTRODUCTION OF MEASURE TO BRING CANADIAN TOURIST ALLOWANCES MORE IN LINE
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WITH US ALLOWANCES. THEY RESPONDED THAT THERE WOULD

BE CANADIAN CONSTITUENCY (TRAVELERS) MUCH INTERESTED
IN SUCH PROVISION. THEY GAVE ASSURANCE THIS DEMARCHE
WOULD BE REPORTED TO APPROPRIATE GOC OFFICIALS.

3. REPRESENTATIONS REPORTED ABOVE HAVE CALLED OUR
CONCERNS TO ATTENTION OF GOC WHICH WAS ALREADY
WELL AWARE OF USG INTEREST IN LIBERALIZATION OF
TOURIST ALLOWANCE. IN LIGHT OF THESE CIRCUMSTANCES,
EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT DELIVERY OF FORMAL NOTE IS
UNNECESSARY.
JOHNSON

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